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DEDICATION.

I LOVINGLY DEDICATE THIS BOOK
TO MY SON,
EDWARD RYAN, JR.

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INTRODUCTION.

THIS book is not for the purpose of instruction in singing, as singing is an art which cannot be taught from book or correspondence. Neither is it a technical treatise on the voice, but instead I aim through the medium of my book to have a "heart-to-heart" talk with the beginner, and with those who contemplate the study of voice culture.

Books abounding in technical terms are valueless to a beginner, and the finished artist does not need such a book. There are many valuable books published, but very few which are written in a manner simple enough for the beginner to grasp. I wish to give all the valuable "hints" and "helps" that it has taken years of experience to gather, covering all the questions that are absolutely necessary to know, making it brief, simple and **understandable.**

MADAME LILLIAN NORDICA

Who is carrying out her plans of establishing a conservatory of music and festival house for operatic performances, at Neal, N. J. Mme. Nordica says: "I am confident that there is a crying need in this country for this sort of musical establishment. Present conditions make it impossible to enable the public to enjoy opera in English or to hear the singing of that great host of talented Americans who are forced to address their efforts to European audiences.

"IS IT WORTH MY WHILE TO HAVE MY VOICE CULTIVATED?"

THE FIRST question which arises with all those who possess an average singing voice is, "Will it pay me to study voice culture?" The answer may be found in the following:

"If you possess a good voice, do not hesitate a moment to cultivate it, regarding it as the most beautiful gift granted you by Heaven."—Schumann.

"But," says the applicant, "I must make my own living. Have I enough material to cultivate and be able to realize returns?"

This depends entirely on yourself and what your ambitions are.

There is a great field in music, and if you have ear, voice, and talent, STUDY. And, if in addition to these you have ambition, determination and application, you are sure of success. What

your field of operation will be, whether church, concert or opera, time will decide.

The power to win is yours—determine to succeed and you cannot fail.

In order to make a success of anything, you must give it your undivided attention, and while doing so, your aim must be fixed constantly on the goal which you desire to attain. Rome was not built in one day, neither can the elementary training of a voice be accomplished in a year.

If you are in good health, you must never allow the warm days of summer to be an obstacle to your practice. Can you imagine the successful banker, rising young doctor, lawyer or actor stopping their work because of a warm day? There may be **some** who do, but they are not the ones who are successful. When you hear a great singer, think of the obstacles she must have overcome in reaching her position of excellence.

Never doubt yourself or your ability, but say "that what determination and application have done for others can be done for me."

You must have confidence in yourself if you want others to have confidence in you.

Never lose your temper. Adeline Patti was asked how she preserved her charm long after the springtime of youth deserts the average woman. She replied, "I keep my temper." Don't expect to grasp, assimilate and put into practice in one lesson what it has taken years for your teacher to accomplish.

I remember one pupil who said her purse would not allow anything better than a hall room in New York for a whole winter's study, and that she really had no "chance" to practice, as her room was too small. This was a very poor excuse, as that was merely one obstacle to be overcome.

The artists who have reached the top

are those who have had **innumerable** obstacles to overcome.

In Switzerland, over a little barber shop, in a room so small that there was not room for two chairs in addition to the piano, Madame Nordica, with Madame Cosima Wagner, and a coacher, practiced daily. The following winter she won one of the successes of her career, as "Isolde."

To reach the top in the profession, you must have more than voice and application, for a singer may have the greatest of technique, yet lack "soul" and "intelligence." The latter two you must possess, as these the teacher is unable to give you.

The beginner, in singing, needs a model to imitate, just as much as the painter or sculptor. Everything is "imitation" until you develop in your work; your individuality will assert itself as you become proficient. Do not allow anyone to frighten you by telling you

"never imitate or you will simply be a parrot." Only the very poor teacher who knows her own weakness as a model would make such an assertion. If the beginner is fortunate enough to secure a teacher who can demonstrate a **perfect tone,** do not be afraid to imitate.

In order to fully interpret the emotions it is necessary to have knowledge outside of the singing lesson. It is for this reason that singers seldom reach the stage of "artist" until they are pretty well advanced in years. It is not how many lessons you take, but the gradual development, which you attain through experience. You must feel the heartbeats of others, must know intimately "joy," "pain" and "sorrow" in order to fully express these emotions. There is no rule of "right" and "wrong" in the interpretation of a song, it being simply a matter of opinion. That is where the individuality asserts itself. I remember taking the old warhorse, "Una Voce

Poco Fa," from Il Barbiere (Rossini) to three of the greatest living singing masters in Italy. Each one interpreted the aria a little differently, and I am positive each thought he was the nearest to the composer's idea. Which one was correct?

"When you sing you are delivering a message, and you must make your audience understand and feel it, as it is our 'feelings' above all that are immediately affected by music." — Von Weber.

Do not be too anxious to realize financially. Consider that Wagner's salary as choir-master in the city of Warsaw was less than $12.00 a month. The great drawback to many of the students in America is the desire to work on the surface only—they don't seem willing to start at the beginning and work their way up. The matter of studying voice culture for a year does not make it possible for the singer to step before an au-

dience and attain immediate success without other preparation.

It takes more than the studio to make a "star." No artist ever began as a master. In addition to being a singer, you must possess talent, character and the ability to manage. If there is one of these qualities lacking, you must remain only an "artist." It takes all three in accord to produce a "STAR."

"CAN I BECOME A GRAND OPERA SINGER?"

THE AVERAGE teacher, in fact, most teachers, will say, "Yes, if you study," but this is not true, as you have only about one chance in a thousand. Have you any idea of the requirements necessary in order to become a "star" of the Metropolitan Opera Company?

You must have a fine voice, a "big" voice, a voice of great power and endurance, fine enunciation, clear and correct pronunciation, knowledge of the modern languages, have at least twenty-five operas committed to memory, fine dramatic ability, good physique, size, personality and "pull." And you must also be on the other side of the ocean to accept the engagement; and then, your acceptance by a director to "star" is about as difficult as an audience with a king.

ALBERT MILDENBERG

The well known composer who has enaugerated a plan to establish Municipal Grand Opera in New York City. Mr. Mildenberg's experience as conductor in the Municipal Opera Houses in France and Italy has fitted him well for this laudable undertaking which will pave the way for the training and placing of many talented pupils in this country, who have heretofore been compelled to go abroad in order to secure positions on the Grand Opera Stage.

There is no reason why a person with voice and talent who has to make his own living, could not do so after several years of study. I have over one hundred pupils who are making a good living by singing, and as many more holding church positions paying them enough to enable them to continue their studies.

Show me a pupil who has to make his own living, and who has studied with one teacher for eight or nine years and is not making his living by singing, and you are showing me one who **never will.**

There is, of course, no end to the study of voice culture. I have studied more or less for over twenty years and am still studying, but if you have to make your own living, secure whatever position may be open to you. The church or concert position is **equally** valuable as the opera.

In Europe, where you hear grand

opera all the year around, it becomes a second nature, but here in our western cities, until recently, grand opera was almost unknown; two or three performances a year was about all we could hope for. This was not enough to thoroughly acquaint the people with the operas, and not enough to create a demand.

In a western city of 200,000 inhabitants where five years ago it was impossible to draw an audience of a hundred persons unless heralded by spectacular advertising, I had the pleasure of witnessing this year "Standing Room Only" during the performance of the dear old operas, Il Trovatore, Faust and Carmen. The operas that the people have become acquainted with through the phonographs, the orchestras and the grand opera study clubs, organized by the more up-to-date teachers. Mr. Albert Mildenberg is taking up a most commendable work, that of establishing the municipal grand opera in New York

City; he will eventually succeed, and, with Herr Andreas Dippel organizing permanent grand opera in the larger cities west of New York, it will not be long before the grand opera positions will be plentiful. Within the next year, through the efforts of Victor Maurel, the grand opera sung in English will also gain ground, and divide honors with the French, German and Italian, giving those who have not studied the foreign languages, but who are otherwise prepared, a chance for positions on the grand opera stage.

Some cranks insist that the days of the old Italian opera, with its arias and glorious coloratura work, are passing in order to give place for the new **music drama.** This is not correct, and will not be possible as long as there are excellent singers who can sing these operas. We have room for both the grand opera and the music drama.

To be an "artist" is the aim the student has in view, and "study" is the means to that end.

"AT WHAT AGE SHALL I TAKE UP THE STUDY OF VOICE CULTURE?"

MRS. L. and her 15-year-old daughter called at my studio. The mother explained that her little girl had been "leading the singing" in school ever since she was eleven years old, but that her voice was not as good as it used to be, and that she would like to have her study, but thought she was too young. I tried the girl's voice and found two registers used so differently that a person sitting in the next room would think they were listening to two persons singing. She had a terrible break between the chest and head tones, and for **four** years had been developing in this bad way of singing. Now, this child should either have taken up voice culture at eleven years of age or not "lead the singing" in school. Children, with very few exceptions, in going from chest

to head tones, will sing with the throat, not understanding how to make the change, or rather how ot place the otne; in this way producing a break, which later in life, when they take up voice culture, will cause endless, and in some cases, permanent trouble.

I know of many children who sing at entertainments, school, church, etc., and you will hear their parents say, "Scarcely a week passes that my daughter does not sing at some entertainment. If she were a little older, we would have her take up voice culture." Now, if your daughter is old enough to sing at entertainments, she is old enough to study. Either do not let her sing, or put her under the care of a good teacher.

"How shall I know if she is under proper instruction?"

A good teacher will, first of all, not allow her to sing at the top of her voice, which all children seem to delight in doing. A good teacher will not develop

on the extreme **high** or extreme **low** tones. A good teacher will even up the **medium** register, teach her how to use the **breath on the tone,** how to **place** the tone, overcoming all seeming change from chest to head, will give her perfect pronunciation and enunciation. This can be done at any age from eleven years, depending on the individual. A girl who has good ear, and who does not lead the singing in school at eleven and sing at entertainments, can begin at sixteen or seventeen and develop into a very fine singer.

"Should my son take up voice culture before his voice has changed?"

This case is just the same as with the girl, **if he sings.** In fact, I have found in my twenty years' experience as singer and teacher that the boy who studies voice culture before his voice changes has an easy road to travel **after** his voice has changed. Many boys' voices have not finished changing until they are

eighteen or nineteen years of age. The boy who studied before his voice began changing understands the breath control, the placing of the tone, and the pronunciation and enunciation. These four fundamentals are absolutely necessary in order to sing well; and whether his voice, after the change, develops into tenor or bass, these fundamentals remain the same, and enable him to continue, instead of merely begin. The boy, who has studied, or is under a good instructor, will know **when** to stop singing. I have known many boys with promising voices, who have ruined them entirely by singing or trying to sing **during** the change. But they were not boys who were under instruction, or they would have known better. I do **not** claim that it is necessary to begin the study of voice culture as a child, as this is entirely a matter of the individual, but I **do** claim that you can count on one hand the singers who have reached distinction and whose voices have lasted

any length of time, who started their singing lessons after they were out of their teens.

I have pupils who are making a good living as church soloists and on the concert stage, who commenced their study after they were twenty years old, but they are the **exception,** and not the **rule.**

I think a woman has the greatest success in teaching children. This may be partly due to her maternal instincts. Her illustrations and demonstrations are more simple than a man's. Her patience with children also fits her wonderfully well to teach the child.

You can accomplish nothing with the voice through fear. If the young boy or girl loves the work, looks forward to the lessons, they cannot fail in whatever they undertake.

To satisfy those who disagree with me in regard to the value of early study, I would ask them to read the lives of the great singers, and they will find that

with very few exceptions they took up the study of voice culture before and during their early teens. Space forbids me to give a complete list. However, for the benefit of those who have no access to the biographies of the singers, I will select the names that I am sure you are familiar with, beginning at 1740, and down to the present time:

Malibran, one of the world's most famous singers, at the age of seven was studying Solfeggio with Panseron at Naples, Italy, and made her debut in grand opera in her fifteenth year.

Pesaroni made her grand opera debut at sixteen, and twenty-five years later we find her still one of the leading grand opera singers.

Teresa Titjens made her debut in grand opera at the age of fifteen.

Pauline Lucca was singing at thirteen, and made her debut at the age of sixteen.

Kellog made her debut as Gilda in

"Rigoletto" at the age of eighteen.

Minnie Hauk took up voice study at the age of twelve, and was singing in grand opera during her seventeenth year.

Christine Nilson, as a child, sang on the streets, was placed under an instructor, and six months later sang at Court.

Albini, during her twenty-second year, was engaged by the Royal Italian Grand Opera at Covent Garden, to sing the leading roles of the grand opera.

Scalchi studied while a mere child, and made her grand opera debut at the age of sixteen.

Melba made her debut in grand opera when she was twenty-two years of age.

Nevada sang in public at the age of six, and has been singing ever since.

Patti made a three-year concert tour under the direction of Strakosh, between the ages of eight and eleven, and made her grand opera debut at nineteen.

Nordica made her debut at fifteen, and is still one of the greatest and loveliest of our singers.

Sembrich sang solos in church when she could scarcely see over the railing, and was in grand opera at the age of twenty.

You may have doubts as to the art of singing of those whom you have read about, but I am sure you have heard at least Scalchi, Melba, Patti, Nordica and Sembrich, and you can have no doubt as to their being classed both as singers and artists.

It is needless to say that these people must have studied these operas in order to sing them, and when you take into consideration that they were not "music dramas" that require really more proficiency in acting than in singing, but the Italian operas, requiring most perfect **coloratura** work, and the Wagner operas, demanding heavy **dramatic** singing, I think you must be convinced that

if early study were injurious to the voice, these great "songsters" would not be living examples of my assertion.

Someone will say, "This may be the case with women, but what of the men?"

We find the great German tenor, Albert Nieman, singing the grand opera roles at eighteen.

Heinrich Vogl, styled the "Interpreter of Wagner," sang these opera roles at the age of twenty.

Italo Campanini was singing in grand opera at twenty-one.

Guilliam Ibos, the grand French tenor, and Van Dyck, were both singing the grand opera roles at the age of twenty-two.

Jean de Reszke was soloist at the cathedral at Warsaw at the age of twelve, and was singing in grand opera at twenty-two. I am sure many of you have heard him sing after his forty-fifth year, and will not deny that he is both singer and artist.

Then I hear someone say, "Perhaps their voices did not change, as they were tenors." There is **some** change at maturity in **all voices.** Very well, what about Victor Maurel? He was singing the grand opera roles at twenty-one. Jean Baptiste Faure took up the study of the voice at thirteen, and at twenty-two **created** the part of Mephistopheles in Faust.

These men and women, whose names stand out as brilliant stars in the firmament of music, studied and sang before and in their early teens, and these are the voices that have been everlasting.

Within the past six or eight years some beautiful singers have appeared in the grand opera—one tenor who claims to have studied less than six months before he appeared in grand opera, and a soprano, making the same claim, and this study is supposed to have taken place after they were out of their teens. It will be of interest to wait and watch

these voices to see if they will withstand the wear of twenty-five years' service, and still be beautiful, or like the fire-fly, radiate their beautiful light but for a moment and then disappear.

SINGING LESSONS AS A HEALTH CULTURE.

"I SHOULD like to take up the study of voice culture, but am not very strong."

That is the very reason you should take up singing. I have seen anaemic girls take up the study of voice culture, and at the end of one year's study develop perfect breathing, a fine full chest, rosy lips, warm hands, an elegant digestion, and a good disposition.

There is no tonic for the **nerves** equal to voice culture. At one of the large sanitariums where eight hundred and five patients were suffering from tuberculosis, there was but one who had been a singer. The nasal breathing prevents adenoids from developing. The deep respiration oxygenates the blood and gives us power to resist diseases. We stand and walk better. We derive unusual pleasure for ourselves, with the

power to entertain others. As the study is unlimited, our interest cannot fail to increase with each year. It fills our lives as nothing else can do.

"Though everything else may appear shallow and repulsive, even the smallest task in music is so absorbing and carries us so far away from town, country and earth, and all earthly things that it is truly a blessed gift of God."—Mendelsohn.

It is a fact that more people become patients through "boredom" than through fever. It is the monotony of the daily routine and lack of interest which is the root of most of the "illness" and "nerves" of our present day young women.

Try the study of voice culture as an interesting and permanent remedy.

The cause of "musical indigestion" is the attending of concerts where one is compelled to listen to singing or playing, which is poorly executed or too far beyond one to be properly understood.

ADVICE TO PARENTS.

PARENTS should encourage their children who are taking up the study of voice culture, as home encouragement is necessary to children. I know that parents are inclined to think that when they pay for the music lessons, nothing further should be expected of them. But this is positively a wrong idea.

Do not make the great mistake of forcing your children too soon upon the public. Many excellent young voices have been ruined in this manner. A child eleven years of age was brought to my studio. She had ear, voice and talent, but was almost "sung out." She had a bad break in her voice, and performed the most unusual contortions in taking a tone, produced by pushing the throat. The mother assured me that everybody thought she sang "just grand." She was to sing at an entertainment in a month, and they thought a few lessons in voice

culture would be of great value. It took an hour of my valuable time to convince them that she must not sing at present, as it was positively necessary to overcome the break in her voice, keep her from singing too much, and cure her audible breathing. They finally arranged for her instruction, but made semi-monthly trips during three months to ascertain if she was ready to sing in public, and left with the remark that "they knew of many teachers who would be glad to have her sing for them as an advertisement." Even the child was disappointed, as undoubtedly she heard nothing but this at home.

Parents should be sensible enough to remember that their little girl cannot finish school in three months, that their son cannot go through college in three months, and that they cannot learn to play the piano in three months.

"That she is young and people will not expect much" is not an excuse. The public judge by what they see and hear

and not by what she may be able to accomplish if she is given time. How often we have heard father say, "Johnny, go and play a piece for the company." Poor Johnny would rather take a licking. **He** knows he is not ready to play for company, but father says, "Here I have been paying for Johnny's piano lessons and Mary's singing lessons for nearly three months, and I haven't heard a song or piece yet. If they are not learning anything, they had better quit taking lessons." And poor Johnny and Mary inflict on the company what might be expected after only three months of training.

Parents, select a reputable teacher—the highest priced is often the cheapest in the end. When you know that they are under perfect instruction, leave it to the teacher as to when they should play or sing in public, and you will find that just as soon as they are able, the teacher will be as anxious and pleased as yourself to have them appear.

"IS IT NECESSARY TO GO ABROAD TO STUDY?"

THIS, of course, depends entirely upon your ambition. There are very few American singers who have reached positions on the grand opera stage without having previously studied abroad.

It is well in any case to get your preliminary training at home. For tone placing and singing you can do equally as well in this country as abroad, as we have excellent teachers here from all parts of the globe.

I would advise the boy or girl who has a good home and lives in a community where it is possible to get proper instruction to take their first two or three years of work in this country. Take up the study of languages and if your progress warrants your making a life work of music, then I would suggest that you go to Europe in order to

VICTOR MAUREL

The noted baritone for whom Verdi composed Otello and Falstaff, thinks that Americans are as much entitled to hear their language at the Opera Houses as the German, French and Italians. To further this project he will include opera in English during his present Grand Opera season in New York City. Mr. Maurel also believes strongly in giving young American artists of real promise, an occasion to make their début in this country and under favorable artistic patronage and he is going to give them a chance to do so.

get the broadening and the finishing touches that are necessary in order to become an artist.

For your German songs and operas you should go to Germany. For the Italian operas to Italy, where it is possible for you to live in the atmosphere of the opera and hear the language every day. The same also applies to the French, who, of all people insist emphatically on perfect diction.

You can, of course, take up and to some extent learn the languages here, but you are liable to meet with the same disappointment as a young lady from the west who studied French in school for several years and thought herself proficient in that language She went to Paris to study music and it was fully six months before she was able to either understand or to be understood in common, every-day conversation.

I am in favor of the class lessons so popular in Europe, and hope some day

we will be able to make them universal. Ten or twelve pupils assemble at one time and each takes his lesson in turn. In this way each gets the benefit of the other lessons. This also enables the pupils to become accustomed to singing before each other, which is invaluable in overcoming nervousness. Some pupils desire to take their lessons in private, as they do not care to sing before a class. This feeling will gradually disappear and it is much better to have it over with in the beginning, than later when you are expected to go before a critic or manager to sing.

The expense of studying abroad may be adjusted entirely according to your pocketbook. When anyone tells you it is cheaper to study on the other side, they display their ignorance of the subject. I have studied in this country, Germany, France and Italy, and I have found that, including everything, it costs about the same everywhere . You can

secure board and room from five dollars a week up to any price you wish to pay. It is also possible to live cheaper than this if necessary, but for the student of singing it is of great importance to eat good, nourishing food, as it is impossible to sing well unless you are in excellent condition physically.

Several of the old Italian music masters do not hesitate to say that it is the American with the large purse who has forced them to raise their prices, when they were perfectly satisfied to charge much less.

Miss Moneybag arrives in Italy to take up voice culture. She calls on one of the old masters; he asks her seventeen lire (about $3.00) per lesson. This sounds cheap to her as she has been paying $5.00 a lesson at home, so she starts out again looking for a higher-priced teacher. She finds one who has had a little more experience with the Americans, he sizes her up and asks her thirty-

five lira; this sounds more in accordance with her pocketbook, and she lists for the season. This sizing up of the American pocketbook has been going on for some time and the old "Maestro" who was perfectly satisfied with $3.00 is waking to the fact that if he wants these Americans he must raise his prices. And so we find at present, lessons costing about the same the world over. However, when Miss Small Pocketbook and real talent arrives, she can always arrange terms in accordance with her pocketbook, when she proves she is there to accomplish results. This is not merely hearsay, but facts gathered in my interviews with some of the most noted singing-masters.

If you intend to go into the grand opera it is advisable to go abroad, as it gives you the prestige which is necessary at present, in order to secure these positions of which we have a fair illustration in the case of a beautiful mezzo

soprano who had been singing with the English Grand Opera Company, and though in every way qualified to sing with the Metropolitan Grand Opera Company, was unable to secure an engagement with them. She went abroad, changed her name, and returned the following season as one of the Metropolitan Grand Opera stars, and is still one of the favorites in that company.

This seems rather inconsistent, but is nevertheless true.

If you are fortunate enough to make your debut abroad you will have practically no trouble in securing a position with any manager on this side of the ocean.

CHORUS SINGING.

IT IS of great value to the singer to belong to a good chorus, provided you know enough not to attempt to be the whole chorus yourself, and are willing to give the others a chance.

To be a success in the chorus you must observe the following rules:

Be punctual.

Stand erect, and on both feet. Let your chest lead.

Make yourself a part of the chorus. This is not a solo.

Don't annoy those around you by "wiggling" or "fidgeting."

Rise and sit down in unison with the others.

Do not look all over the place, but keep your eyes on the conductor.

Do not cover your face with your music.

Remember it is the conductor's duty to beat time. Keep head, arms and feet still.

Do not try to sing louder than the others. You will not be heard any better and will strain your voice.

Remember to hold the long note for its full count.

Time and rhythm are the two great factors in chorus singing.

Remember that "rests" are of as great importance as "notes" in music.

Do not start before or hang on after the others have ceased to sing.

Do not fail to slightly accentuate the **first** beat of each measure except where accents are especially marked on other beats.

Don't look bored because you must stand up to sing. Determine whether you are going to be **too tired** to do your part before becoming a member of a chorus.

Keep your eyes on the conductor.

STAGE FRIGHT.

I HAVE never met a singer, amateur or professional, who does not or has not at some time suffered from this dreadful malady. There is no positive cure but constantly appearing before an audience, and then some of the singers never overcome this form of nervousness.

The only consolation is in knowing that a person entirely void of this feeling will never make an artist, as they are lacking in temperament. Emotion is the flesh and blood of music and the condition is one in which self-consciousness, nervous energy and emotion play a large part. However, as you gain confidence in yourself and your work, and feel that you are in "rapport" with your audience, this sensation will wear off to a great extent.

Very few children before their teens are troubled with stage fright. In fact,

they seem to glory in appearing before an audience. This is the best time to continue the work that will be of inestimable value the balance of their lives. Let them appear before the classes in the studio until they are prepared to appear in public.

When one begins to discuss nervousness, suggestion takes it up and it spreads like wildfire. A young singer who had appeared several times in the same solo and done excellent work was stepping on the stage to sing when one of her friends thoughtlessly remarked: "Aren't you nervous about that high 'C?'" The suggestion immediately lodged in her brain and she could think of nothing but that high "C." Her fear increased and she sang it with an almost heroic physical effort, a tone that had never given her the least trouble before.

It is the confident friend who helps you to win your audience by the encour-

aging remark, "I know you will be a success," while the one who asks, "Aren't you afraid you are going to break down?" in reality will assist you in doing so. Always try and have the confident friends around you, especially in the earlier stage of your career.

There is an erroneous idea about not eating before singing. If you are nervous there is nothing so dangerous as trying to sing on an empty stomach. I know of singers who eat nothing on the day they are going to sing, the result being increased nervousness caused from weakness.

I would not advise a big meal before singing, but I would advise taking something, depending entirely on the individual. A cup of black coffee, a glass of water, a glass of claret, an orange, a raw egg, or anything that agrees with you. Give the stomach some work to do and that "giddy feeling" will entirely disappear. I always take a raw egg before singing.

One of our noted tenors, before walking out on the stage, lights a cigarette, takes three puffs and throws it away. Three puffs could be of very little value, but he imagines he sings better. Judging from his age and voice, and its endurance, it has evidently not injured him, though I would not advise singers to use tobacco.

Those suffering from phlegm in the throat will find almost instant relief in eating a dry prune. I acquired this habit in Italy, where it is very popular with the singers. Dried prunes are beneficial for the general health as well as the throat. Find what agrees with you, for what might be agreeable to one may be disagreeable to another.

When you step out on the stage take time to fully relax, get your mind on the introduction your accompanist is playing. This prepares you for your song. Look **beyond** your audience, not **at** them.

By this time you will have fairly good

control of yourself. Think of **what you are going to sing,** and not of how you are feeling. Sing to your audience as if you were telling them a story. Speak distinctly and make them understand and feel what you are saying. Don't wear anything that binds you, such as tight shoes, tight corsets or tight collars, as they all tend to contract instead of relax. It is through nervousness that singers have "wobbled" off the stage after their solo, before the accompanist has finished. Remember in the interval between the end of your solo and the last note of the accompaniment you should stand perfectly still. Say to your audience (mentally), "Don't move until the accompaniment is finished." You will be surprised to see how well you can hold them. All these little thoughts will help make you forget yourself.

I once read an article on stage fright. The author advised the singer to look at his audience as though they were so

many cabbage heads. I cannot agree with him. You, no doubt, have heard people sing as though they were inspired. I have felt that way many times when singing, and I am sure my audience inspired me. It would have been impossible to sing like that to empty chairs or a field of cabbage heads.

Analyze yourself and your work as much as you please at home, but when you go before an audience, forget yourself and let your aim be to win them.

THE ACCOMPANIST.

I FIND that only about one in every hundred, who study voice culture, are able to accompany themselves on the piano. Nearly all know the keyboard and can get along after a fashion, therefore it is necessary that the student of voice culture should secure a first-class accompanist.

Your voice teacher here, or abroad, is always in a position to furnish you with one. You must arrange for his services at least twice a week. You can have no idea of the progress this will mean in your work. If you are asked to sing at an entertainment, do not take anyone's word that "there will be a good accompanist on hand," but see to it yourself. If it is not possible for you to have your own accompanist, be sure that you have ample time for rehearsal, and if the accompanist present is not a good one, **do not sing.**

A poor accompanist has been the cause of the failure of many young singers who are anxious to get before the public.

The young and inexperienced singer cannot be too particular on this point, and I would suggest that amateurs during their first few appearances before the public sing only with an accompanist with whom they have become accustomed to sing. All young singers are more or less nervous; in fact, I know very few old ones who are not, and this is where your own accompanist proves of the greatest value.

One of my pupils who made her debut said, "I had a sensation as of a lump in my throat, and felt that at the end of the pause I **must** swallow or choke. My accompanist had played for me before and seemed to anticipate my predicament, so gave me a little more time on that 'pause' and I was saved. With a strange accompanist, I would have gone to pieces."

Because a singer is an amateur, their parents and friends seem to think that anyone can play their accompaniments. The truth of the matter is, the less experienced the singer, the better the accompanist must be. Good accompanists are born, not made.

To be sure, practice makes perfect, but I know of many fine pianists who read well, have time, rhythm, technique, execution, and yet who will never make good accompanists. It takes all of these and more.

Nothing makes failure more certain than the blundering of an inexperienced and unskilled accompanist.

SELECTING A TEACHER.

IT IS not always that the best read man on voice culture makes the best teacher; in fact, we find that teachers, who have not been singers themselves, but who have devoted years to the study of the physical and technical side of the question have turned out very few good singers.

In order to make a good teacher, one must first have command of his own voice in order to make perfect demonstrations which are essential to the beginner. Further, a teacher in order to be successful must have practical experience with the world and singers. No two voices can be treated in the same manner. Therefore, the teacher with the practical experience is naturally far better equipped to teach than the one who has merely studied the mechanism of the throat.

It is positively harmful for a teacher

to make any attempt to explain the technical side of the voice to a **beginner.** Better develop the ear and memory. A teacher must have patience and tact in order to be able to deal with the different natures, dispositions and moods that are encountered in the studio. One word of kindness and encouragement will invariably do more toward putting a pupil at his ease and secure the best results from his work than any number of severe sermons and sarcastic criticisms.

The pupils are paying for their lessons and are entitled to courteous treatment. Avoid the nervous, irritable teacher. The teacher who becomes impatient or ruffled because a pupil cannot instantly grasp his meaning, walking up and down the floor with clenched fists chastising the air, and in every way displaying his own nerves and lack of self-control, is not a **teacher,** but a **fool.** Such a person has either forgotten his own earlier struggles or had never studied.

Avoid the teacher with a hobby. There is nothing so barren in the world as one idea, spring from one idea, nourished by one idea and aiming at one idea. This includes the teacher who believes in keeping the pupil on one tone for six months. While your tone needs more than six months to become perfect, dwelling on that one tone alone for that length of time would be decidedly wrong.

We frequently accept students who have acquired numerous bad habits in breathing or singing. They often know their trouble and ask how long it will take to undo this work and get back into the right way. They seem to think it is a matter of a certain time working back to the beginning and then starting over again. This is not true. It is a matter of beginning **now** and beginning right. The thoughts of a pupil should be **advance,** not **retreat.** You must not

think of what you **have done,** but what you **must do.**

Avoid the teacher who advances theories and mechanical contrivances. A laryngoscope in the hands of a physician might save many lives, but in the hands of a singing teacher may ruin many voices. The perfect teacher uses the simplest demonstrations, realizing that technical terms go entirely over the heads of the beginner. The following suggestions are entirely useless:

Sing the tone forward.

Sing the tone on the teeth.

Sing over your larynx.

Sing that tone with the epiglottis lowered, the palate raised, and on the end of the breath.

I have personally heard these instructions given to pupils, and I assure you the pupil did not gain anything by it.

It is positively absurd to insist on a beginner knowing the structures of the vocal chords, neither will the patting, pinching or massaging of the neck and facial muscles, that some teachers advocate, make you sing any better. It is undoubtedly of some benefit to "wrinkles," but not to the voice.

Garcia, admitted to be one of the greatest singing masters of his time, said, regarding the position of larynx being higher or lower or the more or less raising of the palate, that the singer need only follow natural effects, and larynx, palate and the rest will take care of themselves. Do not complicate it with theories.

A new pupil went into the studio of a well-known teacher for a hearing. She took with her a popular song—the only song which she knew. The teacher cried "Trash," and would not even talk the matter over. This was foolish, selfish and unreasonable.

Every voice which comes under our care includes the personality behind the voice, and is of distinct and special interest. This pupil's **environment** had undoubtdly been such that she was not further developed and could hardly be expected to love and understand the music, which the teacher was accustomed to perform or teach. However, many a singer, who first brought the popular song, has developed into a successful church and concert singer. This was not brought about by reprimands and unkind criticisms of their shortcomings, but by patient consideration and gradual development. Give the pupil a chance to learn to perform good music before you demand that they should appreciate it. A good teacher will encourage questions. If there are any questions pertaining to the study of voice culture that he cannot answer it is time he should know.

Unless a teacher is a perfect accompanist, so that he can keep his eyes away

from the keyboard, he should employ an accompanist, for the teacher should **see** as well as **hear** the pupil sing the finished numbers.

And last, but not least, select a teacher who tries to understand you, who makes you feel at ease, and who shows as much interest in your voice as in your pocketbook.

ART FOR ART'S SAKE.

HOW MANY musicians live up to this much-abused term? In my travels here and abroad I have found just two whose lives were entirely devoted to "art for art's sake." They both reminded me of the last act of Beau Brummell, and certainly did not suggest happiness. To fully live up to "art for art's sake," one must necessarily have means, and you would be surprised to know how few of those who are in position to live up to it, do so. Singers, in whom you would expect to find a demonstration,—real musicians, to whom the whole world has bent its knee,—will stand up before an audience and sing a little popular waltz song, a la "After the Ball,"—a song we would consider too inferior to allow one of our pupils to sing. Is this "art for art's sake?" Where then should we look for a demonstra-

tion, if not in the finished singer or artist?

Do not these singers know better? Certainly, but they study their audience, give the few their best, and the masses what they want. In search for "art for art's sake," we turn to the "artist," and we find him trying to please the audience.

We are living in a very material age. If you can afford to do so, live art for art's sake in your home, but if you have to make your living, and cope with the world to make a success, you must study your audience; they paid their money and want to be entertained. You can strike a happy medium, where you will not lower your dignity, as a singer and an artist.

I notice that those who "rant" and "storm" on the subject of "art for art's sake" seldom live it, of which we were given a fair demonstration when one of our disciples of "art for art's sake" went

on a "concert" tour and was so anxious to "please" his audience, that the program was a perfect vaudeville performance. It is needless to say that the "artist" was severely criticised. Don't bill yourself as a concert singer and then give a vaudeville performance. Use judgment. Watch the teacher who is constantly talking "art for art's sake." Note to how many struggling musicians he holds out a helping hand and how much of his time and life he devotes to "art for art's sake."

We teachers charge enough for our lessons to make it possible for us to devote an evening a week "to art for art's sake"; invite our pupils, talk, sing, take up the biographies of the old masters, do ensemble work; study the oratories and operas. I am sure this would help create a greater love and understanding of the better things in music, for the more we hear it, the more we love it. This would go further in

helping to create a love and understanding of "art for art's sake," and would be a greater test of our sincerity.

Debussy, the well-known composer of Peleas and Melisande, says in an article on "Art for Art's Sake": "Don't talk to me about elevating public taste. That is the greatest 'bluff' one can din into your ears. Just think for a moment what the public is composed of. How many in the audience understand music? How many devote themselves to music during the day? An infinitesimal number. The rest, where do they come from? From offices, stores, business houses of some kind, or they come from teas and gossip, and then they go to hear the opera. Most of them are tired after a day's work or idleness, and such people you expect to take an interest in serious music. Impossible! No; the only thing you can do for the public is to lift it, for one moment, out of its daily thoughts, and with that we have to be

content. Under such conditions, what difference does it make whether you have German, Italian or French opera? There is no immovable truth in art. You cannot say this is so or so, and what difference do the means make as long as the end is accomplished? If Italian opera is more effective than German opera, what does it matter? All art is untruth. You may have been told that art is eternal because it is true, but there you are mistaken."

ANDREAS DIPPEL

Of the Metropolitan Grand Opera and General Manager of the Chicago Grand Opera, who through his tireless and skillful service is meeting with great success in the establishing of permanent Grand Opera in the larger cities west of New York, is an enthusiastic supporter of the Grand Opera in the vernacular, giving the many excellent American singers an opportunity to make their début in this country and in their own language. Mr. Dippel predicts the time is not far distant when New York will establish the home of the National Grand Opera.

EDUCATING THE MASSES.

THE MUSICIAN who refuses to make certain concessions to the public gives proof of courage, but not of wisdom. One cannot expect to go before an audience and sing over their heads, and by so doing educate them up to one's own standard of music.

You must reach down from your lofty ideals and meet the public on its own ground.

For example, in creating a love for the grand opera (which the people, especially of the west, up to a few years ago have had no chance of hearing), you must proceed gradually, carefully and with tact.

Teachers of voice culture should organize grand opera study clubs, give concerts, using selections from the popular grand opera—I mean by popular grand opera "Il Trovatore," "Carmen,"

"Faust," etc. These operas contain airs that are attractive, and can be followed by the masses.

It would not be long before the grand opera would share honors with the now flourishing musical comedy in the affections of the music-loving public, and the term "grand opera" would not sound to them like a "bugaboo."

In Brooklyn one afternoon I passed a number of boys coming from school, and was astonished to hear them whistling "Tannhauser." While this would be quite natural in Europe it is rather unusual here, where the popular song has the upper hand with the young folks. I made inquiries and found that a phonograph had been installed in the school and that every morning the pupils listened to selections from the grand operas. My already good opinion of the value of the phonograph was strengthened, as I fully realize what effect hear-

ing good music in the public schools would have on the coming generation.

In order to fully appreciate a difficult composition one must have made a study of music, same as a doctor, in order to appreciate a lecture on some intricate subject about his profession, must have made a study of that profession.

The painter sees in a great painting the beauties of execution that entirely escape the eyes of the uninitiated; yet the musician will go before an audience of whom two-thirds have probably never studied music at all, and expect them to appreciate the classical music, and because they do not, he would brand them as unappreciative, absurd; he expects the impossible.

The average audience does not care for the name of a compositon as long as the music appeals to them, and this is generally a matter of how it is interpreted.

The power of a beautiful interpreta-

tion does not make itself felt in singing classics alone. Many persons harbor the notion that interpretation relates to the work of the dead masters only. This is not true. The simplest song needs interpretation, as well as the oratorio or opera and the difference between good and bad artists is largely a matter of interpretation. A simple song that emanates from the heart and soul, will have a reciprocal effect on others and will outlive all sermons in the memory.

The average audience goes to the concert, not to be educated, but to be entertained. Entertain them, interest them, win them and they will come again.

After you have endeared yourself to them, you can begin to sing more pretentious music, and before they realize it, they are listening to and enjoying the works of the great masters.

I have seen a vast audience go to hear Patti sing "Home, Sweet Home," and while listening they became ac-

quainted with other songs, that by hearing again and again, have helped to educate them to appreciate the better music.

I love the "oratorios" and "grand operas" particularly. They are part of my life. But I do not expect all with whom I come in contact to feel the same.

I have seen more people asleep at a piano recital than I have at church, and I did not blame them, when some amateur would be wrestling with a twenty-page selection of which he had not the slightest conception, with the exception of being able to read the notes and find them on the instrument.

Let us not become so blinded that we can see only one way—our way.

In educating the masses let us not begin by driving them away with compositions which they cannot understand.

Art has no fatherland, and all that is beautiful should be prized by us, no mat-

ter how simple or what clime or region produced it.

When you hear someone dwelling on the fact that Mansfield did not ask his audience what play they wanted, neither did Patti ask them what she should sing, the argument is ridiculous. Bear this in mind: The audience did not go to hear "Il Barbiere" or "Peer Gynt," they went to hear Patti and see Mansfield, and what they rendered was only incidental to the fact that they were Patti and Mansfield, people in whom the public was interested. But while they were listening to these artists they became acquainted with the better works.

So leave it to the "finished artist" to produce the great works. You are an amateur and have your little share to do in educating the masses. Don't begin by giving a difficult program. Sing something simple, that you are perfectly familiar with, and don't be afraid of the new compositions. It is surprising that

even old singers fear a new song. Select something with pretty melody and rhythm and you are perfectly safe.

Always be on the lookout for something you can identify with yourself, just as the artists all have some favorite song.

HINTS AND HELPS.

GET OUT in the fresh air at least once a day, summer and winter.

If you are in good health, **walk** in preference to riding.

Get plenty of sleep. It is better than all other tonics.

If you are "out of sorts," try a little "new thought," or "mental science." It may be all you need.

Sponge your neck, chest and back with cold water every morning.

Girls, accustom yourselves to wearing your waists minus collars.

Boys, wear your collars loose. The artists all do.

Never bundle your neck in winter. A light covering will do.

Eat what agrees with you, and avoid going on diets, if possible.

If you desire to gain weight or put on more flesh, you must eat plenty of

nourishing food at least three times a day, drink plenty of pure fresh water, good rich milk, ale, malt extracts, and everything that agrees with you.

Should you desire to reduce your weight, eat sparingly—a shredded wheat biscuit, some dry toast with a cup of coffee in the morning. At noon eat one or more oranges, and nothing else. For dinner take only one kind of meat or fish, a vegetable, a fruit, a salad, some dried toast, with a cup of black coffee or tea. Use no potatoes, butter or cream.

There is no special diet for singers. It is only necessary to keep in good health, take plenty of exercise, and eat and drink only those things which agree with you.

Pose your speaking voice low, as it not only benefits the voice, but it denotes refinement.

Robusto tenors are high baritones with the head tones developed.

Saddle riding, walking, physicial cul-

ture, fencing, dancing, elocution, the study of any instrument will all be of some value in helping you to become an artist.

Use your brains more than your throat.

Don't be impatient because things do not come your way at once. Rome was not built in one day.

Let your study of music cultivate within you a sympathy and love for all that is artistic.

Do not be unjustly prejudiced against good music because you do not understand it. Hear that class of music more, and it will overcome your prejudice.

Acquaint yourself with the old masters and works before you take up the novelties.

Keep young in mind and thought, and the body will not grow old.

Think for yourself and **think.**

Don't worry, for worry is born largely of misdirected ambition.

When someone is singing, do not shrug your shoulders and assume a pained expression, so as to impress those who may be sitting near you that you are a great critic.

Have you ever thought what a desolate place this world would be without music?

Never neglect an opportunity to hear a great singer. If your means are limited, subdue your pride, for it is far better to sit in the gallery and be able to hear ten "artist concerts" than to sit in the orchestra and be able to hear only one.

Be willing to sacrifice much for your music.

Associate as much as possible with people who **know more** about music than you do. Read everything you can find on the subject. You will find **some** truth in all of it.

When you attend a concert look forward for the best only—don't be a pes-

simist, be an optimist, and you will derive much more benefit. Don't criticize audibly when someone is singing. **An artist never does.**

Before going to hear an artist sing, acquaint yourself as much as possible with the program.

While under one instructor, do not run around to other studios to have your voice tried. It is undignified, and reflects on your teacher, as well as upon yourself.

Become a sight reader by reading at sight.

You can break yourself from clearing your throat by not clearing it. You will be surprised to find it was only a habit.

Punctuality at the studio is essential. Ten minutes early for your lesson is better than two mniutes late.

If there is anything about your lesson that you do not understand, ask questions. You are paying for information.

What Every Singer Should Know

Practice systematically if you expect to make a success.

Beginners should practice only fifteen minutes at a time.

The scales are the backbone of music study.

Remember your consonants are of as great value as your vowels.

In singing, you must use both your nose and mouth for breathing.

Always stand up when practicing your exercises.

Memorize all your songs.

When asked to sing, sing songs with which you are perfectly familiar.

Stand on both feet and let your chest, not your stomach lead.

If you expect to sing well, leave the tight collar, the tight corset and the tight shoes at home.

It is better to stand too near the footlights than too far back.

If you are not an expert at handling a train on the stage, don't wear one.

While waiting for the introduction to be played, don't count the footlights or the stars, but look out beyond the audience, rather in with your eyes and nose.

When holding music, never hold it high enough to cover your face from the audience.

Sing **to** your audience, not **at** it.

Try and look pleasant, even if you don't feel that way. The audience can't help it.

Never fail to give a smile or word of encouragement to other beginners who may be on the same program with you.

It is certainly appalling to know how many good singers have bad stage manners.

A man must never put either one or both hands in his trouser pockets, nor stand with his feet spread far apart while singing. Both of these faults denote improper training.

If you are ever so warm, use your

handkerchief only before or after you leave the stage.

Correct dress is essential.

For a man, for informal entertainments, black suit, black shoes, white shirt, collar and cuffs, with either a black or white tie. For concert, only evening dress is appropriate.

For girls, the nicest thing to wear is a gown; if you do not wear one, try to have your waist and skirt correspond in shade. The so-called shirtwaist effect, which is produced by waist and skirt of different colors, is not effective on the stage.

Wear hose and slippers of the same color if possible.

Amateurs when on the stage frequently rearrange a tie or smooth back a stray curl, etc.; this is but a form of nervousness and looks bad. Finish your toilet at home.

For ease and grace take dancing lessons.

The graduate from dancing and dramatic schools never appear ill at ease before company.

WHAT AND HOW TO PRACTICE.

IT IS not so much **what,** but **how** you practice. The average beginner takes up his practice in an aimless sort of way. Every action should have some result in view. After taking your lesson, if you find you are not positive as to the proper course to be pursued at home, you must ask your teacher the questions necessary to put you on the right path. You should have all your work laid out for you and go about it in a systematic manner. Only in this way can you hope to achieve any degree of success.

A beginner should not practice much more than five minutes at a time on each construction, neither would much less than that be sufficient to accustom that set of muscles to hatt one construction. Never practice your limit tones at either end of your range as much as you do your middle register. What I mean by

middle register is low enough to produce chest and high enough to produce head tones. If you can produce a fine middle register, the high tones will naturally follow in time. Melba says, "On days when my high tones do not come easily in practice, I do not sing them." Do not show or cover your teeth because you have seen some singers do so; individual construction differs.

Pronounce your words naturally and distinctly, never forgetting the consonants at the end of the words. Don't think because you are singing from a Marchesi book that you are studying her method. You are getting the method of the teacher with whom you are studying. There are but two ways of singing—"right" and "wrong"—and it makes little difference from what instruction book you are taking your lesson, they are all good and all constructed on the same principles. The main thing is knowing **what** you are trying to do.

Many pupils who are poor readers worry through several exercise books, and at the end of that time have only memorized the notes and made no progress whatever on the main point—tone.

The pupil should learn to use the ear, mind and memory, and a great deal of time would be gained in tone placing which should be taken up before using an exercise book. If you are not a sight reader, take up this study at once, preferably in class work, as it is absolutely necessary that you should be able to read music at sight.

Antiquated and complicated systems of sight reading are responsible for many poor readers. We need more ear **training** and ability to **think.** Avoid the use of the do-re-me syllables unless you are already proficient in that system. Practice with the pitch names, A, B, C, D, and with the scale numbers, 1, 2, 3, 4, in order to acquire a relationship of the

tones of the scale, otherwise the syllable "la" or any other syllable will do.

If you have an "off day," when all the work seems to go wrong, don't practice. Mechanical work is of no value whatever in singing. Even the artists have their "off days," but don't allow these days to become too frequent.

The best position for practice is to stand naturally, clasp your hands in front or let them hang carelessly and naturally at your sides. Clasping your hands behind your back or resting them on your hips, are both bad positions for singing.

When you practice do not simply kill fifteen minutes' time. Mere practice makes a mechanical gymnast, while study produces a musician.

In taking up your exercises use the instrument as little as possible. For illustration we will take the arpeggio.

Play the arpeggio until you are perfectly familiar with the construction,

then **sing** it once **with** the piano, then play only the chord or keynote and sing the arpeggio **without** the piano; continue in this way in all the keys within your range, getting your pitch from the chord or keynote; this manner of practice is of the greatest value, as you can stand in a natural singing position and as you do not have to give part of your thought to the music or instrument, you pay more attention to the pitch and tone, so that when you come to arias with recitatives **without** accompaniment, you will not have as much difficulty staying on pitch as those who invariably depend on the support of the instrument.

In songs you should pursue the same course, play the most difficult passages, "memorize them" before you attempt to sing them; in this way you do not unnecessarily tire the voice. Memorize all your songs; it is only after you get away from the reading that you are capable of doing your best work. Always

practice before a mirror and you will not be so liable to acquire facial contortions and would soon overcome the very bad habit of lifting the shoulders when you "see yourself as others see you."

Pupils frequently ask why it is so much easier to sing an exercise on "ah" than to sing a sentence. In the "ah" you only have one vowel, while in the sentence there are both vowels and consonants. By diligent practice you will soon find that the tone helps the word, and the words help the tone.

Another complaint frequently heard in the studio is this: "I sang this exercise perfectly at home, and can't see why I am unable to sing it now." How many times did you sing this exercise perfectly at home. Don't consider an exercise learned until you can sing it ten times in succession **without an error.**

Lillie Lehmann says: "I expended ten years in perfecting the trill which every

voice must master," and yet some pupils become discouraged because they can not master the art of singing in a few months!

Many singers complain of a contraction (hardness under the chin). This is frequently found where they have been taught to place the tip of the tongue against the back of the lower teeth to keep the tongue down. Leave the tongue limp and speak your vowels and consonants perfect and distinct, and the tongue will take care of itself.

Those who are working to produce low tones will find that in the morning, immediately after rising, the lower tones respond most readily and may help you to find a way of increasing the lower range.

Don't neglect the scales. Many years ago Madame Patti, while on a concert tour, was awakened from her early morning sleep by the sound of a piano in a room close to hers. It was slow

scale practicing and was maddening to the singer. She rang the bell, and demanded that the practice be at once discontinued. What was her astonishment to learn that the player was not some beginner as she had supposed, but the great artist, Hans Von Bulow.

Why is the so-called Italian method supposed to be the correct method of singing? Partly because the Italian "a" (as you would pronounce "ä") is the most natural sound that can be sung, and as the "ä" is the sound used in two-thirds of the words in the song you sing, it plays an important part in singing.

Very few beginners realize that it is not only the words "law," "raw," "saw," "tall," "hall," etc., that contain the Italian "ä," but also the words "light," "bright," "might."

In the word "night," the beginner usually dwells on the "ee," making it "na-**ee**t," while it **should be** pronounced "**naw**-eet," dwelling on the "ä."

The Italian vowels cover the sound, tone color and pronunciation of the Latin, English, Italian and German, with the exception of the German "o" and "ü."

With the French it is quite different. The sound and production stands by itself. A French singer does not so readily sing the other languages, neither does an American in the same length of time master the French as well as the other languages. The French insist on **perfect diction,** and one of our grand opera singers who delights the New York opera goers by her singing of "Faust," "Carmen," etc., in the French, would not be tolerated at the opera in Paris on account of her diction.

As the French is the diplomatic language of the world, it would be well to take up this language first. Then study your Italian for your singing and you will find the Spanish, Latin and German can be easily mastered.

Study only those songs which have merit. "After the Ball" was composed within the past twenty years, and over 3,000,000 copies have been sold, yet this song is both dead and buried, while the "Earl King," by Schubert, composed in 1798, is today found upon practically all the programs of our noted singers.

When taking up a new song read the words over carefully and get an idea what you are going to sing about before you try to sing it. Never breathe in the middle of a word, or break a sentence by taking a breath.

THE BREATH.

THE FOUNDATION upon which you have to build your voice is the **breath,** and like all other foundations, it must be properly laid, or the structure will be a failure. It is imperative that you have absolute and perfect **control** of the breath. An athlete once said to me, "If breath is the foundation of good singing, I certainly should make a fine singer, as I have the largest chest expansion and can hold my breath the longest time of anyone in the college." The truth is, a small girl, weighing ninety-six pounds, who had less than one-fifth of his chest expansion, had twice the volume of sound-carrying power in tone, and could sustain a tone three times as long as he.

To practice breathing is not practicing singing, and the teacher who keeps a pupil indefinitely on "breathing les-

sons" is either "killing time" or is not a proficient instructor of voice culture.

It should be taken for granted that all healthy persons breathe properly.

It is not the breathing, but the power of control, which is of vital importance. It may be that after taking "breathing lessons" for a period of six months that you will still be far from able to control the breath **on the tone.** It is the way you practice, rather than the length of time which brings proficient results.

You will find by referring to the chapter on "Practical Exercises" that I demonstrate the matter thoroughly.

A good tone should have **resonance,** or what we call "vibration," but not "tremolo." Many young singers confuse these two. Undoubtedly it is just as bad to sing with a straight, cold, unmusical tone as it is to produce an exaggerated "vibrato" or "tremolo."

If you are unable to make the distinction between these two, do not fail to

consult someone who can do so, that you may not enter the pitfalls, which it takes months to overcome.

You cannot realize **how little breath** is necessary **on the tone;** we sing with a great amount of **pressure,** but with **very little breath.** Have you ever taken a covered head tone without scarcely taking any breath, and found that you could sustain it for a practically unlimited period?

I found one of my pupils who had elsewhere taken a course in **breathing,** in taking a tone, would push her breath out so hard that you heard more **breath** than **tone.** In singing a tone or short sentence, her chest would collapse and she would become, as she termed it, "All out of breath." She would give me all kinds of wonderful breath demonstrations, but could not connect the **breath** and **tone.**

I requested her to speak in a natural way the sentence, "This is a very beau-

tiful day." I asked her if she could hear a lot of escaping breath? She answered, "No." I then asked her to place one hand across the ribs and one across the chest and center her thoughts directly at these two points to see if she could ascertain what was taking place there, while once again in a natural speaking voice she repeated the sentence. She did so, and found she was **not** "out of breath," and that her chest did **not** collapse and she did not feel any discomfort. I then asked her to repeat the sentence on the medium tone "E" above middle "C," then on "F," then on "G," directing her each time to think she was merely **speaking** the sentence, and then for the first time in her life she was able to understand **control of breath.** During the next lesson we were able to begin "tone placing" without the least trouble in connecting the breath and tone. **Try it yourself.**

All kinds of athletics, breathing les-

sons or exercises in moderation are beneficial, but they are not voice culture. As your breath plays a most important part in **tone placing**, the breath and tone should start together, hand in hand, from the very beginning. In the following chapter I shall give some practical exercises that will give the **breath** and **tone** a chance to become acquainted with each other.

A FEW PRACTICAL EXERCISES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

STAND erect, but not in a strained position. Place the palm of your hands over your ribs, pointing the fingers forward. (See Figure 1.)

Exhale by blowing slowly through the closed lips, very much as though you were blowing on embers to make them burn. In doing this, you will find that your finger tips will almost meet in front. (See Figure 2.)

Keep your hands in the same position and **inhale** through the nose. You will notice a large space in front between your hands. (See Figure 3.)

Keeping your hands in the same position, repeat this exercise five times; then drop your arms to your sides, relax and rest a few moments, repeating this exercise several times until it comes easy.

Fig 1

Fig. 2

Fig. 3

Fig. 4

Fig 5

Go before an open window every morning, place your hands as in figure 4, inhale through the nose, (don't raise the shoulders) see that the expansion is as great under the left hand as under the right hand (as in figure 5) while holding the breath count 5 (aloud) then exhale while holding the hands in same position, repeat this exercise 5 times in succession. A positive cure for all forms of nervousness.

Be sure when **inhaling** you do not use enough muscular exertion to take enough breath to cause lifting of the shoulders, which is decidedly wrong.

Place your hands as in the first position, exhale, then inhale and, while you keep the ribs extended against your hands, which is done by holding the breath and by muscular tension, speak the sentence, "This is a beautiful day," then exhale, inhale again, holding the breath while you repeat the sentence. Repeat this several times, then drop your arms to the sides and rest.

It is better at the beginning to take **too little** breath than to take **too much.** Most beginners take too much breath, which makes it impossible to control it. Until you understand control of the breath, it is better to only take enough to extend your ribs agains your hand as far as they will go **without discomfort.**

Don't let anyone tell you that "diaphragmatic," "intercostal" or "abdomi-

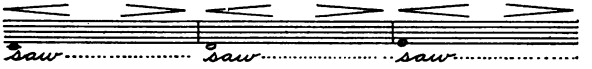
nal" breathing **alone** is the only safe course; perfect breathing is a **combination** of these and more.

By practicing the above exercises you will find in a short time all the organs that nature intended to be used for breathing will be in play.

The reason the beginner is instructed to place the hands on the ribs is to work from the **central** point, and as the student progresses, by continuation of the exercises it will be found that the costal, intercostal, dorsal, diaphragmatic and abdominal muscles are all doing their share.

Place your hands as in the first position. **Exhale—inhale.** Sustain the syllable "saw" on an easy medium tone. As you attack the tone do not let the ribs collapse, but as you sustain it, let the ribs very slowly collapse under the palm of your hands. Try to resist so as to not let too much breath escape. Don't let your chest collapse any more

than is absolutely necessary. The lower the tones you sing the **less** resistance you need, while the higher tones you sing the **more** resistance you need. In order to sustain a high tone, **draw in** slightly under the ribs, leaving the chest extended. Singing the tone, now takes the place of the **exhaling** exercise.



The word "saw," besides giving you the vowel "ä," also gives you the correct sound of the Italian "ah" and what the "ah" should be in singing.

The average beginner sings too much on the tone color of "a" as in **hat,** which, as you ascend the scale, would finally land the tone in the region of the back of your neck.

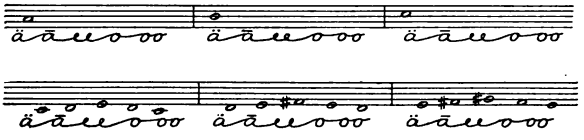
In learning to sing the "ah" or Italian "ä," always use words like "saw," "raw," "law," "paw," "daw," "gnaw," sustaining the tone.

THE VOWELS

a	e	i	o	u

Pronounced
a as ä in saw
e as a in fate
i as ee in meet
o as o in note
u as oo in moon

Example—



In ascending the scale, you should cover the tone. To cover the tone simply put a little more "o" in your "ah," so that by the time you are up near your high limit tone you should almost be singing "so," "lo," "dough." This enables you to find your head tone. It will not be "low" or "dough" but a good "ah." If you do **not gradually curve the "ah" into an "o"** toward your high tones, you will find them turning into the "a" as in hat.

In producing head tones there are two valuable exercises I would suggest.

THE VOWELS.

a as à in saw.

e as ā in fate.

i as ee in meet.

o as o in note.

u as oo in moon

Positions of the mouth in pronouncing the vowels.

Drop your jaw as in singing "saw"; leave the jaw dropped singing "saw," but curving your lips into an "o." You will find an "oh" with fine head resonance and an open relaxed throat.

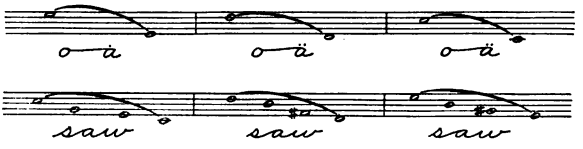
Example—

Sing this exercise in all the keys within your range.

Some find their head tones first by humming through the nose, while to some this suggestion would be of no value.

If you have a break or any trouble going from your high to low tones, practice the exercise from the high tone down instead of from the low tone up.

Example—



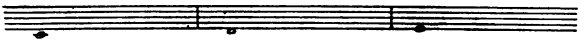
If you have trouble rolling your "r's", which is absolutely necessary, practice the following words in two syllables, not, however, dropping the tone.

Example—

Tree as tau-ree.
Trust as tau-rust.
True as tau-rue
Breeze as b-reeze.
Train as tau-rain.
Bright as b-right.
Brown as b-rown.

After you have mastered the rolled "r" through the above exercises, pronounce them in one syllable as they should be.

Next, take up your consonants before the vowel



Baw, bay, bee, bo, boo	Baw, bay, bee, bo, boo	Baw, bay, bee, bo, boo
Daw, day, dee, do, doo	Daw, day, dee, do, doo	Daw, day, dee, do, doo
Faw, fay, etc.	Faw, fay, etc.	Faw, fay, etc.
Gaw, gay, etc.	Gaw, gay, etc.	Gaw, gay, etc.
Haw, hay, etc.	Haw, hay, etc.	Haw, hay, etc.

J, k, l, m, n, p, q, r, s, t, v, w, y, z.

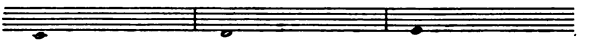
until you have covered all the consonants.

Then your final consonants, as in "late," "date," "light," "bright."

In the word "date," make your "d" and your "a" distinct and **on the tone,** but as you pronounce your "t," which must also be distinct, drop the tone so as not to leave an "after-tone." This must be done in all words except those ending with "m" and "n."

Next build sentences from words which seem most difficult to you and sing the entire sentence on one sustained tone.

Example—



In a song where some particular phrase or sentence seems difficult to you, sing the entire phrase or sentence on one sustained tone, pronouncing the words distinctly until you have gone down several tones **below** and several tones **above** the pitch in which it is written, singing it over and over on the one

sustained tone in all the keys of your range. I cannot tell you of the benefit you will derive from mastering a difficult phrase or sentence in this manner.

For the hardness and muscular contraction under the chin, which has undoubtedly been brought about by "methods" advocating the placing of the tip of the tongue against the back of the lower teeth, put your thumb well up under your chin and see that there is no contraction (hardness). Leave your tongue perfectly limp, and hum first through the nose, gradually turning the humming into an "äo," "äo," "äo," then to "oä," "oä," "oä," sustaining the tone and keeping the thumb pushed well up under the chin to feel that there is no contraction. By using this exercise you will be able to overcome this common fault in a very short time, but you must go at it systematically.

In singing songs pronounce your words perfectly and distinctly, letting

the palate, glottis and larynx take care of themselves. If your method of singing is good, **nothing** can injure your voice.

As this book voices the sentiment of some of the most brilliant lights in the profession, and contains facts based on years of actual experience, it is not egotistical for me to say that its careful, thouhtful and conscientious perusal will give to the student of voice culture assistance that will be of **inestimable value** in reaching his goal.

Start with ease and naturalness and the chances are excellent for your pathway to be illumned with **success.**

THE AUTHOR.

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